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**SOUTHERN AFRICA**

# BEST PRACTICE

## Participatory Rural Appraisals in Post Conflict Angola

**USAID builds capacity for community based natural resource management and local governance.**



Photos: Tracy Molefi

*Youth in Lumeta village produce a community map during the PRA.*



*In Kangamba, Kuando Kubango, local materials are used to illustrate and discuss institutional structures.*

*USAID empowered local organizations with PRA skills that are being applied in community development projects in Kuando Kubango Province, Angola.*

Kuando-Kubango Province in southeastern Angola was one of the areas most affected by the 30 year civil war. People there must reestablish relationships, livelihoods and governance systems. Health and incomes depend on water, soil and forests. To support national and local government planning for sustainable development, information on local natural resources and socioeconomic conditions is essential. However, the approaches used for relief and recovery immediately following the war did not promote community involvement in identifying problems and solutions.

Under the Okavango Integrated River Basin Management Project, USAID is strengthening the capacity of regional and local organizations, such as the Angolan organization Association for Environmental Conservation and Integrated Rural Development (ACADIR). In August 2005, USAID trained 15 ACADIR members in Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) techniques. Outreach officers and community representatives learned how to collect appropriate, relevant, and practical information.

ACADIR and community organizers have now completed PRAs in nine communities and surveyed approximately 4,500 residents. These residents produced maps of the natural resource base and identified issues and needs of their communities. Lack of environmental services, such as water, sanitation, and proper solid waste disposal and lack of health facilities were common concerns highlighted during the surveys. This was the first time PRA was applied in the province.

"We used to talk to the chief. The results are totally different when you talk to the women and youth separately...These techniques will assist us a lot," explained Robert Machalo, ACADIR Outreach Officer.

USAID is working in collaboration with the Okavango River Basin Commission (OKACOM) and other donors to help local organizations develop a model that engages civil society, municipal and regional governments to reduce threats to shared natural resources. These organizations, with USAID assistance, are using the results of the PRA to design and implement community projects that improve livelihoods and address environmental problems.